

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4327

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AMEMBASSY BONN

DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPPLES

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION USNATO

USMISSION USUN

USNMR SHAPE BEL

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 2652

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

USDOCOSOUTH FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CY

SUBJECT: GREEK CYPRIOT POLITICAL SCENE

REF: NICOSIA 2561 (DTG 271600Z AUG 76)

SUMMARY: THIS IS FOURTH AND LAST IN SERIES OF ROUNDUPS ON
GREEK CYPRIOT POLITICAL SCENE WHICH IS NOW SET FOR DEPT 5
ELECTION OF NEW HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. TWO LEFTIST PARTIES
IN "POPULAR FRONT" ARE PRESENTING PICTURE OF DISCIPLINE BUT
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ABILITY OF THE "FRONT'S" THIRD PARTY, THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT,

TO ATTRACT VOTERS AND TO THROW SUPPORT TO AKEL AND EDEK IS MAJOR QUESTION. CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN UNUSUALLY QUIET AND PEACEFUL, PROBABLY REFLECTING VOTER APATHY DESPITE CLERIDES' EFFORTS TO PRESENT DEMOCRATIC RALLY AS FIRST TRUE OPPOSITION PARTY SINCE INDEPENDENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH ELECTIONS ONLY TWO DAYS AWAY, THE BIG QUESTION REMAINING TO BE ANSWERED IS WHETHER THE PRO-MAKARIOS "POPULAR FRONT" OF AKEL, EDEK AND KYPRIANOU'S DEMOCRATIC FRONT WILL HOLD TOGETHER FOR VOTING PURPOSES. EACH OF THE THREE HAS INSTRUCTED ITS SUPPORTERS TO VOTE FOR THE CANDIDATES OF THE OTHER TWO. AKEL HAS DEMONSTRATED PARTY DISCIPLINE BEFORE AND THERE IS NO REASON IN THIS ELECTION TO DOUBT THAT ITS MEMBERS WILL SUPPORT THE COMBINED "POPULAR FRONT" SLATE. LYSSARIDES' FOLLOWING IN EDEK IS LESS DISCIPLINED, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT RANK-AND-FILE EDEK VOTE WILL STAY SAFELY WITHIN THE AGREED COMBINATION. NEW DEMOCRATIC FRONT PARTY, BY CONTRAST, IS MAJOR UNKNOWN IN EQUATION. ITS VOTER APPEAL IS UNTESTED AND SUPPOSEDLY INFORMED OBSERVERS HAVE VARIED SIDELY IN THEIR ESTIMATES OF ITS REAL STRENGTH. AKEL AND EDEK ARE ALSO CONCERNED THAT KYPRIANOU'S SUPPORTERS WHO ARE DRAWN FROM PRO-MAKARIOS RIGHT AND CENTER OF POLITICAL SPECTRUM WILL NOT BE ABLE TO BRING THEMSELVES TO VOTE FOR COMMUNISTS OR LYSSARIDES' PARTY AND THAT THE TWO LEFTIST GROUPINGS WILL THUS NOT GET RECIPROCAL VOTES FROM DEMOCRATIC FRONT. IN MERCURIAL WORLD OF GREEK CYPRIOTS POLITICS, SOLIDARITY FROM THE FAR LEFT THROUGH KYPRIANOU'S RIGHT PROBABLY IS TOO MUCH TO HOPE FOR. PROSPECTS OF ELECTORAL SOLIDARITY BEING TRANSFERRED AFTER THE ELECTION INTO COOPERATION ON FLOOR OF HOUSE APPEAR TO HAVE DIMMED AS WELL.

2. THIS CAMPAIGN APPEARS UNIQUE IN CYPRUS' SHORT ELECTORAL HISTORY ON TWO COUNTS. FIRST, THERE HAS BEEN RELATIVELY LITTLE VIOLENCE BY USUAL STANDARDS OF THIS TRIGGER-HAPPY ISLAND. WE WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE THIS REFLECTS AN INCREASED POLITICAL MATURITY IN GREEK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY, BUT WE SUSPECT IT MAY BE A FUNCTION OF THE APATHY WHICH EXPERIENCED OBSERVERS SAY HAS CHARACTERIZED CAMPAIGN FROM BEGINNING.

3. POLITICAL APATHY COMES AS SOMETHING OF SURPRISE IN THIS SETTING AS THE ELECTION IS ALSO UNIQUE IN THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME

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GREEK CYPRIOTS HAVE BEEN OFFERED THE OPPORTUNITY TO VOTE FOR A PARTY WHICH NEITHER IMPLICITLY NOR EXPLICITLY SUPPORTS ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS' POSITIONS. CLERIDES APPEARS TO HAVE REBUFFED NUMBER OF APPROACHES WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE OBJECT OF BRINGING HIM BACK WITHIN ARCHBISHOP'S FOLD. APPEAL OF DEMOCRATIC RALLY FOR MANY HAS BEEN ITS INDEPENDENCE OF AND OPPOSITION TO MAKARIOS' LINE. IF THIS RADICAL DEPARTURE FROM PAST POLITICAL PRACTICE IS SUCCESSFUL, SUNDAY'S ELECTION COULD BE FIRST

IMPORTANT CRACK IN WHAT FOR LAST 20 YEARS HAS BEEN ARCHBISHOP'S
PRE-EMINENT POLITICAL ROLE AMONG GREEK CYPRIOTS.
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